

via



pacis

Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

Volume 19, Number 2

Summer 95

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August 6 & 9

“A Frankenstein Which Would Eat Us Up” : The Decision to Use the Atomic Bombs on Japan

by Mike McHugh

Up to the time of Franklin Roosevelt's death the United States had no settled policy on the atomic bomb. Along with Winston Churchill, Roosevelt had vague notions that Britain and the United States would use their monopoly on nuclear weapons in the post-war period to reshape the world to their liking.

Harry Truman attempted to put this theory into practice in 1945 but the result was not to be an orderly, stable, peaceful planet. Rather it spawned a cold war, forty-five years of maddening nuclear competition with the Soviet Union and the annihilation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Truman had met with Roosevelt only eight times during his brief term as Vice President and was almost completely uninformed about a number of major issues, including the atomic bomb and relations with the Soviet Union.

Early in his Presidency Truman was at the mercy of his advisors including Secretary of War Henry Stimson. Stimson informed Truman of the existence of the new bomb, calling it “the most terrible weapon in human history”, warning him that “modern civilization might be completely destroyed” if Russia developed it.

In May 1945, Truman appointed an Interim Committee to discuss nuclear policy for the war and immediate post-war period. Members of the committee included Stimson, Chief of Staff George Marshall, Secretary of State James Byrnes and scientists James Conant, Robert Oppenheimer and Enrico Fermi.

This collection of individuals was keenly aware of the danger of the atomic bomb, recognizing that it would be a “menace to society” if not controlled.

They added gravity to that point by explaining that the atomic bomb was only one stage in a program leading to the development of the far more powerful hydrogen bomb.

Still, in its report to Truman on May 31, 1945 the Committee recommended the Bomb be used to end the Second World War. After much discussion the Committee recommended that the Japanese should not be given any warning and that the attack should be concentrated on a civilian area, seeking to make “the most

to reconcile with the Japanese in the long post-war period, thus allowing the Soviets to move in. So, the Committee then prepared a list of four cities whose destruction the Japanese would supposedly accept without becoming so infuriated as to align themselves with the Russians: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata and Nagasaki.

There were confirmed reports that the Japanese were prepared to surrender in June. The Americans had been monitoring Japan's diplomatic codes and knew

of unusual destructive force.” Although Stalin appeared impassive he quickly ordered the acceleration of work on the Russian atomic bomb, which was successfully tested in 1949.

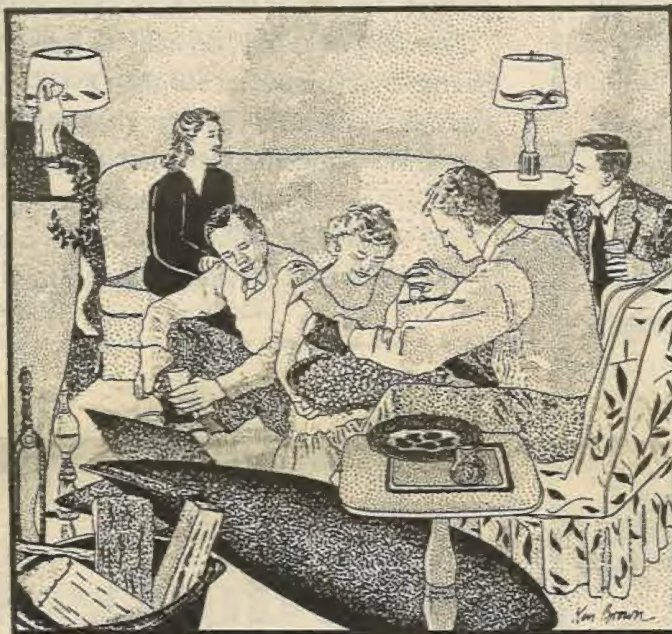
As is well known, the first uranium bomb, “Little Boy”, was exploded over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, killing at least 100,000 people immediately, including two captured U.S. Navy flyers in the city jail. At 1:00 a.m. on August 9th the Russians attacked the Japanese along a broad front in Manchuria. The Japanese soldiers did not offer any resistance. They laid down their weapons and surrendered or fled.

No one can justify the events later that day when “Fat Man” was dropped on Nagasaki, killing 70,000 people including all the Allied POW's in a camp one mile from the downtown area. That plutonium bomb had been scheduled for deployment on the 11th, but favorable weather led the officers to step up the schedule.

On August 10, 1945 the Japanese government offered to surrender on the condition that the Allies made no demand that might “prejudice the prerogatives of His Majesty, the Sovereign Ruler.” The United States accepted this condition. As we now know, the United States could have ended the war on exactly these same terms in June and thus spared Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The actual reason for the use of the atomic bombs was not to end the war in Japan, but to “contain” Russia with a display of military strength. Sadly, though, the myth of saving a million American lives by avoiding an invasion of Japan will probably live on forever, all historical evidence to the contrary.

The author is a staff person for Catholic Peace Ministry and lives at the Des Moines Catholic Worker.



LIVING WITH THE BOMB

profound psychological impact” possible. All of this in direct conflict with their original intention to avoid civilian casualties.

A Target Committee had considered this question since Spring of 1945 and had determined that the desired psychological effect could be attained by bombing Kyoto, the former capital. Annihilating this city, bursting with 1,000 year old palaces and temples, would destroy Japan's will to resist, according to the Target Committee. The Committee also stated that the highly educated populus in Kyoto would more fully appreciate the significance of the weapon.

However, Stimson would not hear of it, saying, “Nobody's going to tell me what to do on this. On this matter I am the kingpin.” He thought that such a wanton act might make it impossible

that they were negotiating with the Russians to end the war. They were asking for a guarantee that Emperor Hirohito would remain on the throne and not be tried as a war criminal.

The main reason for dropping the Bomb on Japan without warning was to incite fear in Russia. Indeed, post-war relations with the Soviet Union were never far from the minds of Truman and Stimson as they pondered the use of the Bomb. The American leaders even postponed the Potsdam Conference until mid-July 1945 in hopes that they would be able to confront Stalin with proof of a successful atomic test in the New Mexico desert.

The Cold War began then, in 1945, in Potsdam, when Truman approached Stalin and informed him that the United States now possessed “a new weapon

What's Happening

by Joanne Kennedy

With this issue of the *vp* we say a gracious "thank you" to Beth Prehiem and Michael Sprong. They had generously donated their time and talent to edit and layout the *vp* for the past two years, and have bravely passed on their skills by training me to take over. Their dedication is greatly appreciated and their skills are sorely missed. This is the first issue we've done on our own.

Beth and Michael have moved on to greater heights through the acquisition of Fortkamp Publishing. Together

with Rose Hill Books they continue to publish books as a cottage industry out of their home in Marion, SD. We wish them great success and encourage our readers to support them.

In this issue look for a reintroduction of former community member, Kay Meyer, a charming letter from Carla and some verbal meanderings with Norman. Frank's second piece on Bishop Dingman is on the center spread and updates on resistance efforts are on page 7. Pay special attention to the article on page 1 by Mike McHugh and a thought provoking piece by Brian Terrell on page 6.

Gospel Haiku

Peach blossoms and nails
olive branches in the sky
good news at the Cross

Gospel Haiku II

Hospitality
Eucharist at the table
One love in our hearts.

Frank Pommersheim

April/May 1995

Frank Pommersheim is a professor of law at the University of South Dakota and long time supporter of the Catholic Worker. A collection of his poetry, *Snaps*, is available from Rose Hill Books 28291 - 444th Ave, Marion, SD 57043. (800)43-PEACE

Please join us for

Friday Evening Liturgy
7:30 p.m., Dingman House,
1310 - 7th St.



*Come celebrate the
Eucharist
and spend
time with
friends*

Everyone is welcome!

Note: There will be no Liturgy on Sept. 15th,

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Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

Bishop Dingman House
1310 - 7th St. (515) 243-0765
Msgr. Ligutti House
1301 - 8th St. (515) 246-9887
Lazarus House
1317 - 8th St. (515) 246-1499

Community Members

Ed Bloomer, Carla Dawson and sons, Julius, Joshua and Jordan,
Joanne Kennedy and Norman Searah

Newsletter

Editor - Joanne Kennedy
Associate Editor, Circulation - Frank Cordaro



photo by Richard Ngamo

Brian Terrell (left) and Frank Cordaro stand on either side of Fr. Roy Bourgeois, long time DMCW friend and spokesperson for the School of Americas Watch (SOA Watch). Roy was in Des Moines May 5th to promote the SOA Watch. The U.S. Army's School of Americas at Fort Benning, GA has trained thousands of Latin American Military Officers. Many of its graduates went on to become notorious military dictators and human rights violators. SOA Watch is a national campaign to try to get the school shut down.

The very next day, on May 6, Brian and Frank were joined by many of their friends at a fundraiser for the DMCW and a "release party" for them after finishing their jail sentences. The very talented Catholic Worker band, *Relative Minor*, from Luck, WI came and provided wonderful music. A good time was had by all!

For more information on the work of SOA Watch contact:

SOA Watch P.O. Box 3330 Columbus, GA 31903 ph: (706) 682-5369

To book an evening with *Relative Minor* contact their agent Bobby King :
(515)255-0800

Calendar of Commemorative Events

August 6th

Prayer and Witness 12:30p.m. at Offutt Air Force Base, Main Gate, Bellevue, NE. Contact Jo Peterson (402) 556-9057

Showing of *The Atomic Cafe* 6:30p.m., Friends Meetinghouse 4211 Grand Ave, Des Moines, IA.

Interfaith Prayer Service, 7:30p.m. St. Cecilia's Cathedral 3869 Webster St. Omaha, NE. Contact Joyce Glenn (402) 451-5755

August 9th

Ring of the Japanese Bell, 7:00p.m. South side of the Capitol Building, Des Moines, IA.

***Watch for the War Resisters League's Alternative Enola Gay Exhibit to be on display in Des Moines. Contact Bill Douglas (515) 243-2571.

Please remember the "Chicago to ELF Walk for Peace" these months. The Walkers left Chicago, home of the first atomic pile, on July 1, and are walking to Clam Lake, WI, one of the Project ELF sites. They will host a peace encampment there from August 6-9.

The purpose of the walk is to demonstrate that disarmament can happen through peoples' commitment to the principles of truth, love and nonviolence.



Community News

by Kay Meyer

"Keep me, God, for in you I have found refuge."
-Psalm 16

Many folks will remember me, Kay, the red-head with the red-head kids. I lived at the Catholic Worker from about 1987-90. I left Des Moines when I was pregnant. I moved out to the country to try and put my family back together and at the very least, to find a calm pre-natal and post-natal environment for bringing my third son, Neil, into this world. Neil is almost four now, Kary is eleven and Jann is fourteen. We find ourselves living with the Catholic Worker as neighbors this time, but

it remains a big part of our lives.

It seems like I have "walked through hell with kerosene shorts on", as Eddie would say. It has been a difficult time for me and my family. I don't know how I would have ever survived without my faith challenging me to work God's love into my life. Living in the bosom (why do Carla's hugs come to mind) of this kind, caring community, has been a refuge, a shelter.

Many people come to the worker seeking shelter but they find more than just a roof over their heads. As a friend and neighbor of the Catholic Worker the refuge I find is for my spirit, heart and mind.

In times of trouble

people need many things; advice, money and sympathy to name a few. But the need for refuge, a safe place to find one's spiritual way, is sometimes the hardest to find.

In my own life I'm much too quick to offer advice and judgements. Sometimes when friends approach me with troubles I feel much too burdened myself to "give" anything. But I offer refuge and hope it is a place for growth and rest.

I am very grateful to live next to a refuge like the Catholic Worker. I've changed much in the last few months, the teachings of guests, friends and the Worker community will stay with me forever.



Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

A lot of things have happened since I last wrote. Some good and some not so good, so I'm going to share a little of both with you this time.

A good thing was that Fr. Frank let us use his car when he was in prison. I drove back home to Massachusetts and spent some time with my mom and family. It was a great trip. I drove a lot of the way on back roads. I went through parks, up mountain sides and down valleys. I drove through lots of small towns and large cities too. For gas and motels, I used the money I earned ringing bells last Christmas and bottle claims.

When I was home I was able to drive my mom over to visit my brothers and sisters. We took drives all around. I

got to see all the changes in the last 15 yrs in my old home town. The last place my mom and I went to visit was my Dad's grave. I'm glad we did. When my Dad died I never did get back for the funeral. I was afraid of flying so I took the bus home, but I missed the funeral.

One bad thing on the trip was that I didn't get to see one of my brothers. I have not seen this brother in over 10 years. The real bummer is that I left Massachusetts three days too early. If I had known I had three more days I would have driven to his home in New Hampshire. Maybe next time. The best thing about going home was having Fr. Frank's car, because it made me feel like I was on my own. It was nice to be able to take my Mom to places instead of having to rely on others to drive us. My mom doesn't drive.

I'm hoping to get back there again this September. I want to spend some time with my friends Richard & Dot helping them with their family business and rebuilding a '57 Chevy. On the same trip, I want to help out my brother who is a farmer. I guess my visit home in March showed me how many things I have missed in the lives of my family in the past 15 years. I want to visit more often from now on.

For a long time now I have been wood carving. Recently I made carvings for Eddie, Maria and Bobby (a long time friend of the C.W.er, former CCNV community member and father of Luke & Katie Bobbitt). I'm working on something for Carla, Joanne, Frank, the Bishop and my mom now.

I started carving wood way back when I in school. Sometimes I use

to hit the road and head down to Cape Cod. While I was there I made friends with six old men that buddied around together. As a past time they would carve little figures, paint them and sell them to the tourist shop in town. They used their profits to buy beer. They let me sit around with them as they carved and talked. They were like a little family and they treated me like I was their grandson. They told me that whenever I found myself on the side of a road and I wasn't going places I always had something to do as long as I had a pocket knife and a piece of wood.

Another good thing that is happening in my life is that I have started to attend "TOPS", a weight loss support group. TOPS has chapters all over the country for people with weight problems. I go to a

meeting every Tuesday. At each meeting I learn something new about other people's weight struggles plus I get an uplifting feeling knowing that people with weight problems care about other people with weight problems. I've learned that weight problems are often caused by everyday stress and unmet emotional needs. The same things that push people to abuse drugs and alcohol push people to overeat. So far I've lost 10 lbs.. I want to lose 10 more by July 25th, my birthday. I will be forty five years old. I want to continue losing weight and work on my health.

I want to thank you all for your ongoing support of the Catholic Worker. Next time I'll write more about what is going on in the house. Please keep us in your prayers.

Hi everyone!

My sons, Joanne and I went to Long Beach, California from June 12th to June 24th. Joanne's sister Mary Pat Carothers and her family provided hospitality for us. They welcomed us with open arms.

Mary Pat and her husband, Gregory, gave up their bedroom for me and the boys. Julius loved the jacuzzi tub. Joshua and Jordan loved the Carothers children, Angela, Joe, Kevin and Catya.

We went to Disneyland, Sea World and the San Diego Wild Animal Preserve as well as a couple beaches. We could not have gone to all these great places without the help of our friends, especially the Basingers, the St. Pius Men's Group, Sr. Susan Waddel and Rita Hohen-schell.

Also special thanks to Helen Oster who gave us some supplies to help us cope with the very long bus rides. (It added up to 78 hours altogether!) We thank everyone who kept us in their thoughts and prayers and continues to do so. We had the time of our lives.

I am putting together a photo album of our trip and welcome everyone to come and see for themselves what a wonderful time we had. Thanks again to everyone who helped make it possible. God Bless You.

Love,

Carla Dawson

by Frank Cordaro

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a three part series on Bishop Dingman. It was written by Fr. Frank at the Federal Prison Camp in Yankton, SD this February. The first part was a review of the book, In The Mist of His People, a biography of Bishop Maurice Dingman, by Sisters Shirley Crisler and Mira Mosle.

This second part deals with the years Dingman served as the Bishop of the Des Moines Diocese. It recounts Bishop Dingman's unique and gifted leadership style and some of what he was able to accomplish. The third part will be a reflection on the way Bishop Dingman dealt with several difficult issues of his time with grace and wisdom.

Bishop Dingman became the bishop of the Des Moines Diocese in April of 1968. These were not easy times for the U. S. Catholic Bishops. The Second Vatican Council had closed and now came the difficult task of implementing the mandated reforms.

Bishop Dingman was determined to make this his highest priority. He was intensely loyal to the Pope and the directives of the Second Vatican Council, backing up everything he said and did with Second Vatican Council documents and teachings of the Popes.

He wanted to open up the Des Moines diocese, making it more democratic and as inclusive as possible. He brought with him a new vision of leadership, using revolutionary Second Vatican Council ideas like subsidiarity, shared responsibility, availability, hospitality, listening to the Spirit, ecumenism and equality.

Bishop Dingman realized that the Church had a hierarchical side but that at the same time the Church was the

"People of God". It was in this tension between the Hierarchical / Vertical Church and the People of God / Horizontal Church that Bishop Dingman saw the work of the Holy Spirit.

To illustrate the changes he was trying to bring about his favorite image was the Church moving from a 'fortress' Church to a 'lighthouse' Church.

The concept of subsidiarity was best demonstrated in the consensus way Bishop Dingman made decisions. He understood that those people most affected by a decision should be an important part of the process. These are not just nice sounding words. He meant and practiced what he said.

Bishop Dingman saw himself as just one of many participants in a dialogue, no better nor more important than anyone else. Open communication among all parties was encouraged.

He operated with complete trust in people. He believed that with enough study and dialogue

sion he wanted but he almost always got the best decision that could be made. The process was often messy and cumbersome. It took more time to reach a consensus decision. But in the end, a decision was reached which all could embrace. Rarely did Bishop Dingman go against a decision reached in this manner, only when it offended his conscience.

This open process and genuine show of trust did not go unnoticed by the people of the Des Moines Diocese. They came to believe and trust the Bishop, not on his words alone but on their own lived experiences of the process.

With the Vatican II spirit Bishop Dingman brought to the Diocese new Church structures and organizations were formed to share the responsibilities of leading the Church.

Bishop Dingman oversaw the formation of a Priest Council of the Whole, something radically different from the elected Representative Council of Priests being



were in place and fully functioning in the Des Moines diocese long before many other dioceses even began studying their feasibility. The Des Moines Diocese became the envy of every forward thinking church person in the region. Many talented people came to work in the Des Moines diocese because of Bishop Dingman.

Bishop Dingman was a very personable leader and words like compassionate, gentle, open and accessible are often associated with his memory. He became known as a bishop who was willing to dialogue. He would meet with any and all people, people on the political left and right, religious progressives and conservatives.

Those who worked for Bishop Dingman often complained that he was too accessible as they witnessed him being personally attacked and insulted by disgruntled individuals. Yet, Bishop Dingman never returned their anger. In the tradition of Christian love he showed absolutely no guile towards anyone who

harbored ill will towards him.

Bishop Dingman was also well known for his great spirit of hospitality. He considered the official Bishop's residence, the old Tubor Mansion in a wealthy neighborhood in Des Moines, the property of the whole diocese. Furnished in early St. Vincent DePaul, he let people from all over the diocese and beyond use that home as if it were their own. He carried this sense of hospitality with him when he sold the Mansion and moved into an apartment in a low income neighborhood on the north side of Des Moines.

One year Bishop Dingman let the Des Moines Catholic Worker community use his mansion to host the Mid-West Regional Catholic Worker gathering. It was a remarkable weekend, fondly remembered within catholic worker circles.

There is still talk of the great Saturday night party, although, unfortunately Bishop Dingman was unable to attend. In

Cordaro had asked Dingman if he ever got angry at the Church for its injustice and the people it hurt.

Cordaro recalled, "Bishop Dingman just shook his head and raised his hands (palms out, in his characteristic fashion) saying 'You musn't let anger for the Church overwhelm you. Anger leads to despair, and despair will lead you out of the Church. When I see the Church acting wrongly and hurting people, I grieve because everyone is part of the Church. ...I love the Church very much and when I see this happening, I'm resolved to work all the harder to make it better....'"

- Quote from *In the Midst of His People*, page 189.

people, together, would make the best decision. Only when a consensus was reached would Bishop Dingman "put on his Bishop's Miter" and approve the decision with the full authority vested in his office.

Bishop Dingman did not always get the deci-

formed at the time. The Priest Council was followed by a Sisters Council and later, a Deaconate Council. He mandated the establishment of Parish Councils, followed by Regional Councils and finally a Diocesan Council.

All of these structures

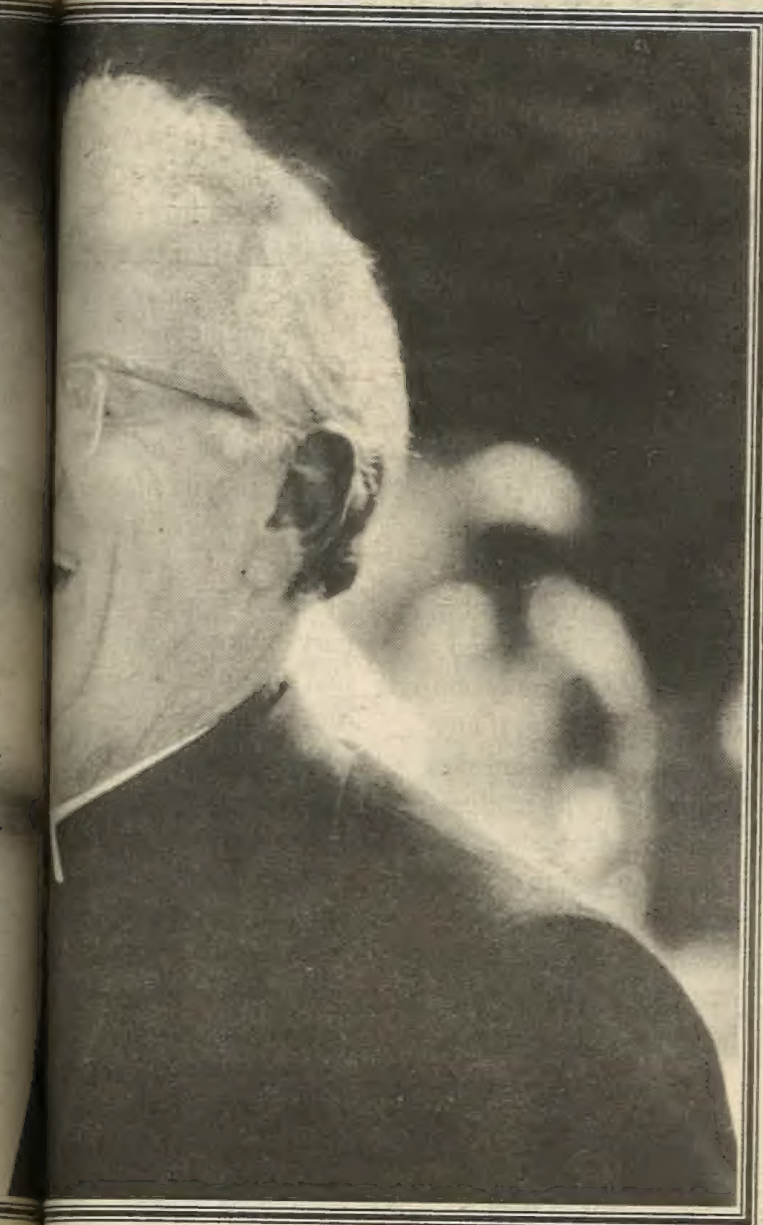


photo courtesy of the Des Moines Register

He believed the Spirit was making herself known in the many movements he associated with.

It was during Bishop Dingman's years that Catholic Charities was changed to the Catholic Council for Social Concerns. This change reflected a more progressive and socially involved Catholic witness as called for in the Second Vatican Council.

He established a Social Action Division within the Catholic Council to help put into practice the mandates for justice asked for in the gospel. The Catholic Peace Ministry and the Catholic Rural Life Offices were outcroppings of the Social Action Division.

Bishop Dingman was keenly aware of a need for ecumenism. In his dealings with Church leaders he first tried to develop strong personal relationships. Once personal relationships and mutual trust were in place in the community, specific ecumenical structures could be developed.

Bishop Dingman brought the same vision and philosophy of leadership and consensus decision making to his ecumenical relationships. He started with the assumption that people of Faith share more in common than that which set them apart. He believed

each Faith tradition had something to contribute to the common good.

With Bishop Dingman's leadership, the Diocese of Des Moines was one of the charter members of the Iowa Inter Church Forum, a broad based ecumenical organization. Des Moines was the only Catholic Diocese to join the Forum.

Many ecumenical efforts came about because of the work of the Forum. At the time of his stroke in 1986, Bishop Dingman was serving as president of fourteen ecumenical organizations.

His impact went well beyond the confines of the Des Moines Catholic Diocesan community. More than any Iowan in the last thirty years, Bishop Dingman was able to bring people of all faiths and religious traditions together to work for common social concerns.

With Bishop Dingman's ecumenical leadership the Catholic community of Iowa was able to address a wide range of social issues with other faith traditions including; racism, prison reform, repeal of the death penalty, labor and worker rights, women's rights and welfare and poverty concerns.

From the archive ...

My favorite Bishop Dingman Catholic Worker story was the time he came to confirm Brent Vanderlinden into the Catholic faith.

Brent was a community member who became a Catholic and asked Bishop Dingman to confirm him at the Catholic Worker. I was in jail at the time, after a protest at SAC.

The house was packed. During the homily the Bishop talked about the meaning of confirmation, how the sacrament was meant to strengthen the faithful to more boldly and courageously follow in the footsteps of Jesus

The bishop gave communion to everyone who wished to receive. At mass that night there were three Protestant ministers the Bishop knew well: Rev. Bob Cook, a Presbyterian minister, Rev. Chet Guinn, a Methodist minister and Rev. Suzanne Peterson, an Episcopal priest. The bishop gave each of them communion as well.

During the reception, Chet Guinn came up to Bishop Dingman and told him that he had confirmed Brent in the Methodist Church when Brent was in Junior High School. Bishop Dingman leaned over to Chet and said with a smile on his face, "Well... let's hope it takes this time."

Frank Cordaro, via pacis summer 1992

his absence Margaret Quigly did a Mother Teresa impersonation, while others found the Bishop's vestment closet and managed a Pope John Paul II appearance! It was great fun.

The weekend closed with a special Eucharist celebrated with Bishop Dingman. I think the Bishop felt as good about letting us use his mansion as we felt taking it over for our weekend gathering.

Bishop Dingman also became known as the Bishop of movements; the Cursillo Movement, Teens Encounter Christ, Christian Life Communities, the Charismatic Movement and the Better World Retreat Movement to name a few.

Bishop Dingman had always thought highly of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement. When Joe DaVia and I helped start the Des Moines Catholic Worker Bishop Dingman became one of our strongest supporters, often giving us assistance out of his own pocket.

He visited each of our first three houses to bless them and he made a point of joining us at least twice a year for our Friday night Masses. He also lead our Friday night round table discussion on several occasions.

He was open to following the lead of the Holy Spirit.

In the Midst of His People

The authorized biography of Bishop Maurice J. Dingman

by Shirley Crisler, SFCC, and Mira Mosle BVM

Foreword by Senator Tom Harkin

\$14.95 paper, \$24.95 hardcover

To order contact:
Rudi Publishing
1901 Broadway, Suite 321,
Iowa City, IA 52240
1-800-999-6901



From Baghdad to Oklahoma City

A Call to Repentance

by Brian Terrell

"There is nothing patriotic about hating your country or pretending that you can love your country but hate your government."

Bill Clinton

"I'm sentimental, if you know what I mean: I love the country but I can't stand the scene."

Leonard Cohen

A few days after the bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City I listened to a National Public Radio call-in talk show. Callers, most of whom were more thoughtful and articulate than the ditto heads who call in to the stations higher up on the AM band, were given a respectful hearing. Opinions on the bombing and the militias that might have spawned it were all treated seriously regardless of the host's personal opinion.

The benign atmosphere in which this open and exchange of ideas was taking place was shattered briefly when a caller, identified as a worker with the "Food Not Bombs" cooperative in Berkeley, attempted to put the Oklahoma City bombing into context with the bombing of Iraq during the Gulf War.

The toleration of even so liberal an institution as NPR has limits and this caller was interrupted, cut off mid-word. The hosts were speechless for a moment, shocked that such crazy words were even uttered.

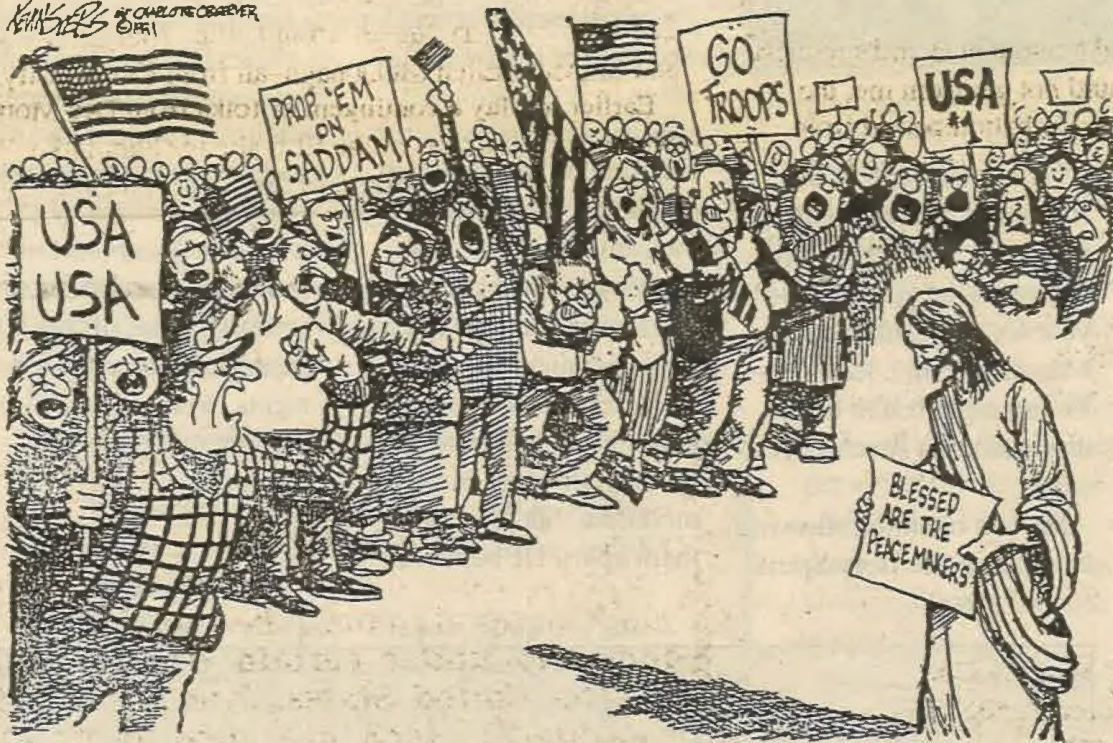
In the months since, discussion of the Oklahoma City bombing has been brisk. Many paranoid theories have been brought to the public forum but the questions raised by the caller from "Food Not Bombs" continue to be intolerable. These questions, however, can not be quieted in my heart nor among my community of friends.

If human misery could be

weighed on a balance, the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building would pale before atrocities occurring around the world, many perpetrated by the U.S. Government and its proxies. Four years ago, U.S. forces bombarded Iraq, killing one thousand times the number of victims of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Compassionate and professional aid poured into Oklahoma City from all over the country. In Baghdad, the United Nations forbade emergency help and the trucks that attempted to bring aid on the road from Amman became targets of U.S. bombers.

KEVIN SIERS
Courtesy Charlotte Observer
KINGSLEY BY CHARLOTTE OBSERVER
OPPI



"There is no right," claimed President Clinton. "to kill people, who were doing their duty, or minding their business, or children who are innocent in every way!" Few, if any of the thousands massacred in Iraq were masterminds of that nation's invasion of Kuwait. Those killed by the U.S. military were mainly people who were "doing their duty, or minding their business, or children who are innocent in every way."

The media makes little of the fact that Timothy McVeigh, the suspected

Oklahoma bomber, is a decorated Gulf War veteran. When McVeigh came home from the Gulf our violent culture greeted him with medals and parades, gratitude for the destruction he took part in there.

For continuing the work for which he was trained, McVeigh now sits in jail facing multiple indictments for terrorism and murder, the President himself calling for his execution. Malcolm X might say, "The chickens have come home to roost!"

"There is no right to resort to violence when you don't get your way," says Mr. Clinton, "... and those who claim such

rights are wrong and un-American!" I'm happy to find agreement with the President that those who claim a right to blow up a building when they don't get their way are wrong. As one who loves this country, though, I wish with all my heart that I could agree that the claiming of such rights is un-American. Resorting to violence when you don't get your way is all too American. It permeates our culture and history. It is the ethic of our streets and of the Pentagon.

When Fr. Daniel Berrigan and eight others burned Se-

lective Service records with homemade napalm at the height of the Vietnam War he apologized for making the utterly un-American assumption that it was preferable to burn papers than to burn children. Dan spent much time in American prisons for that act of conscience.

Immediately after the federal building bombing, before the dust cleared, President Clinton promised deadly retaliation if any foreign government was implicated. His readiness to rain fire and death upon "people who are doing their duty or minding their business or children who are innocent in every way" because of the alleged

crimes of their rulers makes Mr. Clinton's claim that the Oklahoma City bombing is un-American shameful and false.

If the bombings of Hanoi, Baghdad, Panama City, Hiroshima and Nagasaki are not condemned by our society as "wrong and un-American"; then neither can we disown the murders in Oklahoma City as "un-American". The blood will not wash away.

Much has been made in the media of the extreme right, the militia movement and their paranoid fanatics. Some of these folks indulge in nightmarish fears of the Government selling our sovereignty to the Chinese, the UN, or the international (read: Jewish) bankers. I wonder if it is easier for people to fear an imaginary enemy because the real threat that exists from our possession of Trident submarines and B-2 Bombers is too horrible to acknowledge.

None of the bizarre treacheries feared by the radical right compare to our nation's shameful war in Vietnam. A war fought by two administrations, where 50,000 American GI's and several million mostly noncombatant Southeast Asians were killed. The war never had any clear military or foreign policy objectives. The Vietnam War was prolonged to shore up the political fortunes of Presidents Johnson and Nixon. The recently published memoirs of H.R. Haldeman and William French Buckley confirm all this.

This year on August 6 our nation will remember the 50th Anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, a "butchery of untold magnitude" according to Pope Paul VI. We have learned nothing from our murderous past. While the Government conspires to further shut down the social functions of the State we move ahead to build more horrible weapons of war.

I pray the bombing in Oklahoma will not harden us but call us to true repentance, realizing that we will have no peace within our borders as long as we continue to depend upon violence when we "don't get our way" in the world.

The author, a Catholic Worker in Maloy, IA, is a government official, serving the capacity of mayor and recently as a federal prison

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resistance notes

Update on Fr. Frank

It is great to be free! I completed my six month prison sentence April 18th and returned to Council Bluffs and the good people of St. Patrick's Parish. No sooner did I return to St. Patrick's than I was asked to accept a new assignment in the Diocese. This summer I begin pastoring the Catholic communities in Lacona, Milo and Rosemount, IA, three small rural communities, forty-five miles South East of Des Moines.

It looks like it will be an ideal assignment for me. I am doing the rural parish pastoring thing which I enjoyed so much while I was in Logan, IA. At the same time I am taking advantage of the nearness of Des Moines, being close to my family and the DMCW community. I'm hoping to take a more active part in the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community.

I am not "carrying any BOP paper" with me, which means I have no probation obligations with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. However, I am carrying some "Church paper" so to speak.

I was asked by my Bishop and our Diocesan Priest Personnel Board to agree not to "cross the line" at Offutt for three years. They wish to ensure that I will not be taken away from my new parish assignment for a six month prison sentence for the next three years. This obligation does not preclude my continued organizing and legal witness at Offutt, nor does it restrict my participation in other resistance efforts.

I did agree to the Bishop and Personnel Board's request. What the U.S. Government could not get from me, the Church now claims, a three year probation period from "crossing the line" at Offutt. I, in turn, have asked the Bishop and the Personnel Board to take my Resistance Ways & Works seriously. I asked them to start accepting that I intend to continue in this important ministry and witness and I asked them to factor this into their consideration about my future work in the diocese.

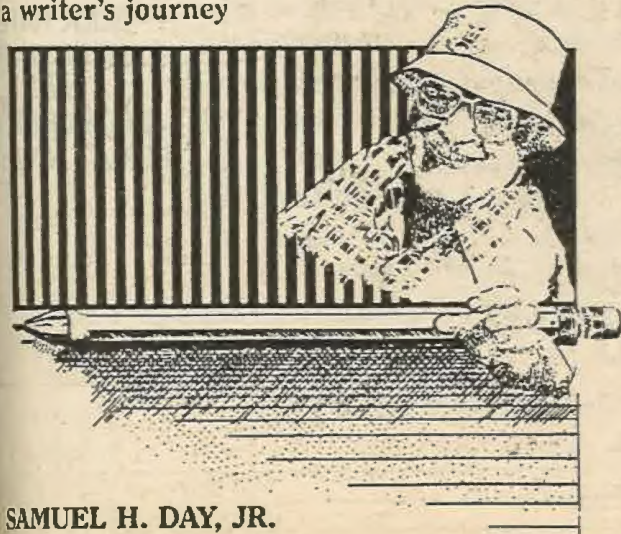
I was assured they had taken my concerns seriously and that they fully expect that I will continue my involvement with the Resistance Church and the unique, direct work for peace and justice I have developed over the years. This is all good news for me.

I started my new assignment on June 22. My new address and phone number are:

Holy Trinity of SE Warren Co.
P.O. Box 145, Lacona IA 50139
(515) 534-4691

Crossing the Line

From editor to activist to inmate—
a writer's journey



SAMUEL H. DAY, JR.

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Mid-West Resistance News



photo by Jo Peterson

These eight people "crossed the line" and received "ban and bar" letters at the Second Annual Memorial Day Witness at the main gate of Offutt Air Force Base in Bellvue, NE, home of the Strategic Nuclear Command (Strat-Com). They are from left to right; Shirley Randa from Des Moines, Sr. Theresa Maly and Vince Goeddeke both from Kansas City, Rita Hohenshell, from Des Moines, Jerry Meyer from Duluth, Mary K. Meyer, Bro. Louis Rodeman, and Sr. Mary Ellen McDonagh all from Kansas City.

Earlier in May a contingent of folks from Des Moines went to the Annual Mother's Day action at the ELF site in Clam Lake, WI. Along with twelve other people, two members of the Des Moines contingent, Rita Hohenshell and Joanne Kennedy, were involved in a nonviolent direct action and were issued tickets.

NOTICE

"The United States Strategic Nuclear command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, controls the targeting and launching of nuclear weapons aimed at major population centers. The use or threatened use of such weapons could be considered a crime against humanity under certain treaties signed and ratified by the United States. You are advised that participating in such use, directly or indirectly, could expose you to prosecution under these treaties, even if you were following orders."

For more information on how international law could effect military and civilian personnel at Offutt Air Force Base contact Nukewatch, P.O. Box 2658, Madison WI 53701

The above text was used on the leaflet Sam Day and others tried to hand out at Offutt Air Force Base last February. Sam received a six month prison term for his efforts. He is currently at the Federal Prison Camp in Oxford, WI. He is due to be released on Aug. 16th. Write to Sam at: Sam Day #05121-045, Oxford FPC, P.O. Box 1085, Oxford WI. 53952.

You may also want to write to John LaForge and Fr. Carl Kabat. Both are currently in prison in the Midwest for nonviolent resistance to nuclear madness. John is doing eight months for his efforts at trying to close down ELF. You can write to John at: c/o Anathoth Community, 740 Round Lake Rd., Luck WI 54853. Carl is doing a five year prison term at the North Dakota State Penitentiary for his attempt to disarm a Nuclear Missile. You can write to Carl at: Fr. Carl Kabat #1688, NDSP, P.O. Box 5521, Bismarck ND 58503.

Congratulations and welcome out to Bonnie Urfer and Cory Bartholomew. Both recently completed six months sentences for their efforts to stop project ELF.

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Des Moines Catholic Worker
P.O. Box 4551
Des Moines, IA 50306

We need to say a great, big thanks to Capitol City Fruit for generously giving us lots of produce!

Having said that we need to

beg, beg, beg

for continued support from everyone

We have been extraordinarily busy these past few months and there's no sign of it letting up.

Our most pressing needs are silverware, diapers, feminine hygiene products, personal hygiene items, baby formula,
large food items (like #10 cans of beans and big bags of noodles) and as always, money.

Thank you for your help and consideration, all progresses well in the struggle to know Christ's love.

Our houses are slowly but surely being repaired and our souls are lifted knowing the love you all have for us.